

For immediate release
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Funding included for key programs to improve New Jersey's environmental infrastructure

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Sires supported H.R. 2996, the fiscal year 2010 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, which passed the House by a vote of 254 to 173. This bill makes a number of key investments in clean air grants and clean drinking water funds, such as \$1.5 billion for low-interest loans to help local communities improve their drinking water systems, \$284 million in grants to implement the Clean Air Act and reduce emissions from diesel engines, and \$815 million to clean up toxic waste sites.

“These funds are critical to improving environmental infrastructure in New Jersey’s 13th District,” said Congressman Sires. “Several of these programs were severely underfunded in the last administration, and this year’s increased funding will allow New Jersey to address aging infrastructure to improve water and air quality in the state.”

The bill also includes funding for other programs that are significant to New Jersey. H.R. 2996 provides \$160 million for sewer and water grants to local communities – a program that is highly valued by many communities in New Jersey. Additionally, funding was included for the evaluation and cleanup of “brownfields,” which provides \$100 million to turn former industrial and commercial sites from problem properties to productive community use.

H.R. 2996 now awaits Senate action.